

TESTIMONY
House Energy & Technology Committee
October 7th, 2013

Good morning Chairman Nesbitt and ladies and gentlemen of the Committee.

On behalf of the Michigan Energy Efficiency Contractors Association (MEECA), I thank you for the opportunity to have a business voice for energy efficiency heard before this Committee. My name is Brindley Byrd, executive director of MEECA.

MEECA was formed earlier this year to support our core members: companies who are contractors, auditors and engineers that design and install energy efficiency upgrades in Michigan's residential, commercial and industrial buildings.

We are here to serve as a resource while Michigan readies to make good energy decisions.

Our primary purpose is to advocate that Michigan has the most *robust, reliable, qualified* and *predictable* energy efficiency industry in the nation.

Energy efficiency is the least expensive and most cost effective resource available in our energy portfolio. The cheapest BTU of energy is the one that is not generated. It should be first in the loading order while considering our future energy policies.

Sound energy policy can structure a framework coupling energy efficiency and utilities so they maintain their financial stability ensuring continued delivery of energy to Michigan ratepayers. One such example is an on-bill financing mechanism where a portion of the money paid by a customer covers the costs of loans used to finance energy efficiency upgrades. Such loans could be made by utilities and thus generate dividends for utility shareholders. This type of policy would put more contractors to work – and that's good for Michigan's economy.

MEECA fully supports the continuation of the energy efficiency resource standards currently in place that have spawned the growth of Michigan's energy efficiency industry to over 1600 companies actively installing energy savings -- all of which is 100% local economic development. As we heard last week so illustriously by Mr. Kushler, there is a lot more we could do.

We strongly encourage Michigan to look at increasing those standards bringing even more stability and growth potential to this yet emerging industry. Doing so will position Michigan to be a national leader with a robust energy efficiency industry.

At this very moment, there are thousands of men and women all across this fine state plying their trade helping your constituents save energy. These men and women work for companies who make up Michigan's energy efficiency industry -- an industry that is important to Michigan's economy, the health of its citizens and the environment, and the sustainability of its businesses. Let's be sure to keep these Michiganders in mind as we work to ensure Michigan's energy future.

Thank you again for the opportunity to speak. I am more than happy to take any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Brindley Byrd", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Brindley Byrd
Executive Director